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Delinquents involved in youth employment programs may b e characterized as dropouts, unemployed high school graduates, underemployed youth ready for skill training, resistant and hard-to-reach, having cultural and communication inadequacies, and having physical and emotional disability. Once trained these youth sometimes refused to accept employment, were poorly prepared for earning money, got into trouble, sometimes quit the low-entry jobs, were sometimes fired after placement, and had to be brought back into the program for further training and remediation. Other factors included discrimination, a shortage of the requisite kinds and numbers of jobs, the obsolescence and inadequacy of existing vocational schools, the refusal of labor unions to support apprenticeship programs, and the lack of program coordination between those who train and those who hire. The school dropout is for the most part trainable and employable, but only with a considerable investment in time and dollars. The strategy of the economics of intervention and return on investment indicate that prevention is cheaper than therapy. Some alternatives to existing youth employment training programs are the armed forces model, the school model, the redefinition model and the industrial model. (DM)

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THE PROBLEM OF YOUTH TRAINING

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I. INTRODUCTION -- THE CONTEXT

The Office of Juvenile Delinquency (OJD), in its comprehensive community development demonstration programs, has approved the launching of a number of youth employment programs, which though funded mainly by the Department of Labor, are an integral part of the basic comprehensive program of the Office of Juvenile Delinquency. The youths involved in these programs were, for the most part, dropouts, unemployed high school graduates, and underemployed youths. A few were ready for skill training, a few were returned to school after remediation, many were resistant and hard-to-reach (requiring extensive motivational work), many had cultural and communication inadequacies (requiring remediation and prevocational training sequences), and many had physical and emotional disabilities (requiring special services).

The findings and achievements that emerged in this experience were obtained in adversity, for the past, with its negative conditioning; and the present, which maintains cultural malaise in a negative environment, have proven to be most formidable enemies. At the flesh-touching level -- as opposed to the theoretical and administrative levels -- the task of developing these youths, even though their behaviors had been predicted, was discouraging and frustrating -- much akin to the task of Sisyphus: laboriously rolling the boulder up the hill. These youths brought to the program a dismaying repertoire of personal problems: many were illiterate and of low intelligence; many were adjudi-

cated juvenile delinquents; many had sired or given birth to illegitimate children; many had zero or limited work experience; some were emotionally disturbed; and a few were narcotics addicts.

Once in the program these youth: sometimes fell asleep during training because of their habit of staying out late; were destructive of property, mostly through carelessness and ignorance; stole money and supplies used in training; occasionally committed crimes and were sentenced and arrested; and sometimes dropped out of training for lack of interest and other, more pressing, reasons.

Once trained, these youth: sometimes refused to accept placement; were poorly prepared for earning money (one consequence of a job) and foolishly spent and overspent, to the extent that they got into trouble; sometimes quit the low-entry jobs in which they were placed; were sometimes fired after placement and had to be brought back into the program for further training and remediation.

The programs in which these youths participated covered the following range:

Academic - pre-requisites for training; language arts remediation.

Vocational - training courses encompassing a variety of skill levels; orientation to the world of work (seminars in career development and planning, finding employment, interviewing, etc.)

Health - medical, dental, and physical and mental hygiene.

Social - an enriched environment which introduced the youth to the world beyond the slum, recreation facilities and proper settings for socialization.

Psychological - counseling, guidance and programs aimed at community involvement.

The goals of these programs were generally as follows:

Individual Goals - rationality, positive self image, identity, and the capability of self help.

Social Goals - social responsibility and awareness, the ability to relate to others, and the ability to function effectively both in the slum and the city outside the slum.

Employment Goals - development of skills, motivation, and aspiration; employment; economic independence.

While these youth employment programs have generally not been characterized by spectacular success, they have provided a new range of services and have contributed importantly to our understanding of the difficult problem of training disadvantaged youths. Why, then -- given these mutually attracting ingredients -- at least some youths who wanted to work and earn money; program goals, the laudability of which few would quarrel; and, with minor exceptions, dedicated program personnel -- was the payoff less than maximum? The answer is that it was probably optimal, given a youth employment problem the size, scope, and complexity of which has never confronted any culture but our own. And this is the only context in which failure, break even, and success can be reckoned. Without elaborating the complete and detailed context, we can at least establish a few of the most significant parameters. These are as follows:

1. The effect of science and technology and its exponential rate of growth on manpower. This impact consists of:

   (a) Eliminating large numbers of traditional labor force entry jobs, particularly in farm and factory.

   (b) Upgrading skill requirements for employment (creating lead-time problems and a mismatch between world of work requirements and existing educational systems).

(c) Eliminating a substantial number of jobs from the economy through automation (many of which were at the low and middle manpower level).

(d) Compounding the training, retraining, and employment problems through the introduction, at a rapid rate, of new technologies (resulting in a "shifting over" of the highly trained and a further entrapment of the unskilled and those with low skill levels, particularly members of minority groups).

(e) Creating such profuse productivity that fewer and fewer workers are able to produce more and more (thus eliminating the necessity for those unlettered, unskilled, and functionless who seek blindly to enter the alien world of gainful employment).

(f) Creating ecological catastrophes that have left entire regions in destitution, areas such as Appalachia, which was hailed only two decades ago as a region of undiminishing prosperity.*

2. Demographic factors.

Data from the United States Department of Labor show that 26 million new young workers will be eligible for entry into the labor force in the present decade -- a 50 percent increase over the 1950 to 1960 period. This, by itself, is a large number for any country's economy to assimilate. Now, when we take a closer look at the data, we find several additionally distrubing factors: (1) 7½ million of the new young workers will not have completed high school (2½ million of them will have dropped out before completing grammar school); (2) while the annual average increment of new young workers in this decade will be 2.6 million, the year 1965 will register a phenomenal 3.8 million -- a 50 percent increase over the average annual increment -- an increase the order of magnitude of which is too much to handle given present budgets, programs, and personnel resources. In addition, urban concentrations cause serious resource problems. Given the magnitude of these numbers and the present level of effort, we are only able to serve a small fraction of youths who want to become part of our labor force.

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*For those with doubts about the exponentiality of change, see Enrique Canova, "West Virginia: Treasure Chest of Industry," The National Geographic, August 1940.

3. Minority group factors.

(a) The poor, particularly members of minority groups, are denied access to good education and their level of preparation for meeting the post-school world is greatly retarded. It is not at all uncommon, for example, to find that many of these teenagers have a reading level of 4th or 5th grade.

(b) Minority group youth are poorly endowed in terms of inheritance, goods, services, and opportunities, and thus lack basic coping skills for self sufficiency.

(c) The state of mind of the minority group youth is poor. He has a negative self image and he has been conditioned to despair; thus, he is lacking in motivation, aspiration and expectation.

(d) The style of life of the minority group youth is such that he is given to indigence, he relies on "magical thinking," and he prefers immediate gratification and is reluctant to engage in activities involving postponed rewards.

(e) The deviant and aberrant behavior characteristic of minority groups, and the culture of poverty generally, is to a large extent, an adaptive response to the reality of the conditions of living. Until these conditions change, minority groups will continue to be resistant to rehabilitative and developmental efforts.

There are numerous other factors in the youth employment problem -- discrimination against hiring youths from minority groups, the ability of the economy to generate requisite kinds and numbers of jobs, the obsolescence and inadequacy of existing vocational schools, the reticence of labor unions to support apprenticeship programs, the lack of program coordination between those who train and those who hire, and an employment opportunity system in which, for the minority group youth, the bottom rung on the employment ladder is very often also the top rung.

II. THE EXPERIENCE OF THE OFFICE OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The youth employment programs in the demonstration projects of the Office of Juvenile Delinquency begin with an almost overwhelming handicap: a decade and a half of the most catastrophic failure on the part of the home and the school, two primary institutions of socialization and development in our society. Such profound and pervasive lack of achievement is difficult to reverse in a short period of time. However, in spite of this inordinate difficulty, the experimental and demonstration youth employment programs have contributed findings that have:

(1) Enhanced our ability to solve some of those aspects of the youth employment problem over which we have some measure of control (these clearly do not involve such areas as national economic planning for a favorable GNP/employment ratio, problems of economic conversion, or regulating the impact of science and technology on the labor force, but rather, the remediation, rehabilitation and development of disadvantaged youths).

(2) Influenced the methods, approaches, and program development of other agencies which have a primary responsibility for youth employment problems.

The experience of the Office of Juvenile Delinquency in youth employment programs can be briefly summarized in the following findings and activities:

(1) The neighborhood-based youth employment components, funded by the Office of Manpower, Automation, and Training (OMAT), have served as a model for the Youth Opportunity Centers now being created by the State Employment agencies throughout the country. Though the centers will not offer the same range of intensive services as the Office of Juvenile Delinquency pilot programs, their projection represents a significant form of institutional change on the part of the Employment Service in that the centers will be neighborhood-based, will utilize services of sub-professionals, and will be youth-oriented.

(2) Similarly, the experiences of the Office of Juvenile Delinquency youth employment programs have helped to shape the program of the Neighborhood Youth Corps (Title IB of the Economic Opportunity Act).

(3) A summer workshop designed to improve vocational information available to minority group youth was developed by the Delinquency Control Training Center of Wayne State University in cooperation with the Industrial Council of the President's Committee on Economic Opportunity. The format of this workshop will be used in 1965 as a prototype for 18 communities scattered throughout the United States.

(4) A more significant form of involvement on the part of employers emerged in one community when employers joined forces with project staff, vocational educators, employment service staff, and developed a consortium approach to identify hard-to-fill jobs and develop a curriculum for training hard-core youth for these specific jobs using funds available under MDTA. The consortium approach made it possible for employers to specify needed skills and job requirements, for the vocational educators to develop specially tailored institutional training programs, while the OJD staff served not only as a catalyst for the enterprise but recruited, motivated, and counseled the trainees.

(5) Except for increased difficulties in persuading employers to hire youth with police records and increased need for counseling services, most projects found delinquent youth no harder to engage and no less likely to succeed in the program than the non-delinquents. These projects have demonstrated that local employers can be engaged in the planning of youth employment programs and that as a result of their interest can be persuaded to relax some of their stringent policies against hiring youth with probation and parole records (the 1965 Amendments to the MDTA program will permit experimentation in bonding for those with criminal records).

(6) Training and employment programs designed for hard-core youth are much likelier to succeed when they have built-in supportive services such as medical examinations and treatment, counseling, job conditioning, as well as seemingly less important services such as bus fare, or money for hair cuts, or shirts in which to go for a job interview.

(7) Youth ages 16 and 17 appear to require considerably more time to become job-ready in that job-readiness also required some maturity and motivation -- two crucial factors signally absent in 16 and 17 year old out-of-school out-of-work youth. Here the application

of the work-crew concept was particularly useful. Also, tentative findings from some projects reveal that another approach to 16 or 17 year olds might be long-term subsidized work experience (18 months to 2 years) which gives these youth time to mature and become less attached to street life instead of pushing them into actual jobs on which they are less likely to succeed and which spell another in a long line of failures. Youth 18 to 21 are much more likely to succeed in less time.

(8) As a result of involvement in youth employment programs, community line agencies have become less pre-occupied with the conventional psychogenic approach and have moved in the direction of ameliorating the conditions of living in slum areas.

(9) Highly successful summer job programs have been launched to help bridge the gap between school and work, resulting in more self-sufficiency in these youth, substantial earnings, and good community awareness and involvement.

(10) Problems encountered by youths in employment programs suggested that greatly increased amounts of counseling and guidance were necessary if success ratios were to increase. Following this, OJD staff members and directors of OJD Training Centers helped USES plan Project CAUSE at a conference at Howard University. Nine OJD Training Centers were used to train the counseling and guidance personnel in these programs, to provide consultation, or to perform evaluation.

(11) The demonstration project revealed that the incidence of delinquent acts often peaked during the hours that recreation facilities were open and that recreation facilities were not being used by youth over age 14. This resulted in the design of recreation facilities which have a special appeal for youths 15 - 18, such as Teenage Drop-In Centers and Teenage Garage Centers. Thus, recreation became a bridge to work through the hobby as a pre-vocational activity and through linkage with Detached Workers and Neighborhood Resource Units who used the recreational setting and access to youths to try to move them into youth employment program opportunities.

(12) A number of findings have emerged which have necessitated programmatic shifts. Mobilization for Youth, for example, discovered the phenomenon of "employment shock," that is, the viability of a youth to hold a job after having successfully mastered pre-employment sequences. This has resulted in more emphasis on placement and follow-up and making sharper distinctions between married and unmarried trainees in placement programs.

Another concerns program drop-outs. While the youth employment

training drop-out rate is lower than that for high schools, small-scale, follow-up efforts were undertaken to ascertain the impact of the program on them. This limited effort revealed three things: (1) those who dropped out felt that they had benefited from the program, (2) many of those who dropped out had found employment, and (3) a more rigorous and extensive follow-up program for drop-outs could contribute importantly to further program revision.

Another concerns the periodicity of attrition. One of the major "loss" points is between completed application form and appearance at in-take interview, indicating that even when youths are "reached," many must be "pulled in" to the program.

Still another concerns bookkeeping practices which tend to minimize program successes in the area of placement. The arbitrary 90-day placement reporting period is probably unrealistic. The high correlation between the incidence of dysfunction and mental illness and the length of time unemployed suggests that the ability of a youth to acquire a job after training is, at least, in part, a function of the length of time he was unemployed before entering training.

There is also evidence that a number of placements have been made directly by teachers and are not recorded as placements by USES. These findings indicate the need for revisions both in bookkeeping and placement programs.

(13) With regard to training and retraining, our employment programs have shown that training is difficult and retraining is comparatively easy. Thus training appears to be a good investment for an economy characterized by rapid scientific and technological change.

(14) Last, but certainly not least, is the fact that youth employment programs have demonstrated a Federal concern in the midst of much local unconcern. As one teenager put it, "We're poor. Nobody cares about us. The teachers don't care; the police don't care; my friends don't care. An' I don't much care either." This teenager is saying that the world he knows has failed him miserably up to this point. The youth training program is perhaps the last chance he will have to escape destruction or chronic dependency.

The dissolute school dropout, who constitutes 90 percent of the male juvenile delinquent population in the United States, no matter that he is often illiterate or functionally illiterate is, for the most part, trainable and employable, but only with considerable investment in time and dollars. Having perceived this, we should also perceive that, in effect, the dropout is offering us a choice as to how we spend our dollars: we can spend them on development or we can spend them on detection, arrest, detention and on an impressive array of related costs.

III. SOME ECONOMIC FACTORS OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The problem of quantification, as it involves human services, is a difficult one for a variety of reasons -- the inappropriateness of existing mathematics, the lack of systems analysis and cost/effectiveness studies, etc., in the area of human growth and development. However, there are two important comments that can be made in terms of economic payoff: one has to do with the strategy of the economics of intervention, and the other with return on investment.

1. The strategy of the economics of intervention. A primary consideration is implicit costs and how they escalate as the adjustment problems of individuals worsen. What follows, is, in effect, a sliding scale:

Program	Cost/Individual/Year
(a) Pre-school	$200 - $500
(b) Public school (average child)	$450 - $750
(c) Public school remedial (additional)	$200 - $1,000
(d) College	$2,000 - $4,000
(e) Non-residential youth employment	$500 - $2,500
(f) Job Corps (disadvantaged youths)	$4,800
(g) Bershire Farms (problem youths)	$5,800
(h) Wyltwick (hostile, alienated youth)	$8,500
Lifetime custodial care (prison, mental institution)	$100,000 - $150,000

This schemata tells us several things:

1. Prevention is cheaper than therapy.
2. Costs are a function of lapse of time and extent of damage.
3. Early identification of problems and early intervention represent the optimal strategy (i.e., where to intervene and when to intervene).

   The programs of the Office of Juvenile Delinquency represent optimal intervention (the best time to make the investment) in terms of cost/effectiveness, since they focus on programs in the following areas: pre-school, public school, and non-residential youth training programs.

2. Return on Investment

(a) Postive costs*

(1) In Federal taxes - trainee can repay the cost of his training in 5 years.

(2) In one year of employment -- trainee can earn several thousand dollars more than it cost to train him.

(3) In investment -- trainees can provide a return on investment of 11 percent.

(b) "Negative" Profits

One of the big enemies in the Anti-Poverty Great Society program is chronic dependency. The federal public assistance programs developed in the 1930's were designed to address the problem of starving people. The need was clear and unmistakable, and the emphasis had to be on keeping people alive. Thus, historically, our emphasis in public assistance has been on palliation and treatment rather than on cure and eradication of the disease. Here language captures the essence: people receive "relief" checks, not "development" or "investment" checks.

Since the formulation of these programs changes have occurred in society and the economy which call for new emphases. While there are some obstacles to these needed changes (e.g. the cumbersome arrangement between Federal, state and local communities), impetus has been added by the increasing evidence that the more we spend on cure and disease eradication -- which is to say, on development -- the more we can reduce costs associated with palliation and treatment: subsidization, detection, arrest, detention and the like.

While it is still too early for the evaluative and follow-up studies of youth training programs to have been completed, there are indications that developmental programs can effect savings in palliation and treatment. Cook County, Illinois, for example, invested some $3 million in work-experience program for people on public assistance rolls. The result was a decrease in the welfare budget at a time when budgets of welfare agencies across the country were increasing. Thus, among the interventions of the scale between palliation and eradication, employment training appears to be the heavy weight -- the balancing intervention which tips the scales.

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* See Leroy A. Cornelsen, "The Economics of Training the Unemployed" School Life, October 1964, for a further delineation.

The launching of a really meaningful and systematic developmental program -- one whose focus is cure and disease eradication -- will precipitate a substantial increase in costs. But we must be careful to distinguish between short-range and long-range costs. The introduction of data processing to a business operation results initially in a sharp increase in cost. However, the increased productivity and efficiency of the data processing system result ultimately in substantial savings. Another way of stating the point is that changing the strategy of investment and increasing the investment can, if properly programmed, bring about significantly larger returns.

The cost of chronic dependency is high and a certain amount of chronic dependency is unavoidable. However, we do know that whenever we can effectuate a shift in the spectrum from chronic dependency to something better, the costs decrease dramatically. In order to accomplish this shift, we will have to identify with much greater precision those millions of Americans who need not be chronic dependents and then begin the design of new, intensive developmental programs.

IV. ALTERNATIVES TO EXISTING YOUTH EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PROGRAMS

Youth training programs have recently begun to receive criticism now that researchers have had the opportunity to assess, even if in a preliminary way, the results of some of these programs. Some of the criticism is justifiable (all programs have not been designed and managed with equal competence and imagination), and some unreasonable (expectations can not be great when the extent of damage is great, and further, when the programs are of the experimental and demonstration variety). Criticism ranges from a call for changes in program content and shifts in program emphasis to a call for a revolution that will change the fabric of society (the latter, by the way, is not a useful piece of informa ion). But it is no good to decry the effectiveness of youth employment training programs without suggesting a range of alternatives. Of these alternatives, there are at least four models that appear to be worth consideration.

The Armed Forces Model

Given the magnitude and characteristics of the youth training/employment problem, stated earlier, there is ample argument that drastic revisions in current Selective Service induction practices could make a significant difference in achieving the manpower development objectives that now confront us. Currently the Armed Forces are rejecting 50 percent of all candidates, 30 percent for reasons of emotional disturbance or educational deficiencies (educational deficiencies having to do with I.Q., ability and aptitude, as measured by current techniques).

Among the capabilities of the Armed Forces for engaging some of the developmental problems under discussion, the following may be cited:

1. Experience in training inductees who are not at training readiness, including the development of education/training methods which appear to have out-paced those in the public school system.

2. Programs focused exclusively upon low-income groups tend to get labelled, denigrated, and become less effective. The Armed Forces as a common denominator, has experience in taking and developing all socio-economic classes (and in telescoped sequences).

3. The military, as compared with the Job Corps and other agencies, have a vastness of resources adequate to the size of the problem.

4. The military have universality of services -- medical, dental, nourishment, education, training, recreation -- which permits simultaneous multiple development.

5. The military has managability (know how and physical facilities), in an environment of health, discipline, cleanliness, and order, which has enabled them to successfully handle groups of delinquent inductees.

6. The military separation program permits inductees to graduate back into civilian life disciplined, developed, and in a good further developmental posture.

The Armed Forces may argue that they are not a social welfare agency, but the astonishing magnitude of their education and training programs puts them squarely in the manpower development business. As such, current induction practices constitute a waste of uneducated but potentially skilled manpower and a misuse of educated manpower.

The School Model

Going back to the sliding scale referred to earlier, the cost of keeping a youth in school of $750/year, as compared with other costs, is a highly desirable cost -- but only if we are talking about schools as they do not yet

exist, for existing schools have little relevance or meaning for today's minority group youth. Malthus once defined economics as "the dismal science"; similarly, we might define education, at least for the disadvantaged youth as "the crudest art." However, if we can conceive of a school so attractive that a disadvantaged slum youth will refuse to drop out of it, the cost, even if upped a little, will be attractive compared to other costs. In all likelihood what we are talking about is a school which is open at unconventional hours, perhaps seven days a week, where a youth learns what he wants to, when he wants to, at his own pace, and on his own terms.

The Redefinition Model

Work, for the general population, is nothing more nor less than the method by which we distribute wealth. However, for the culture of poverty, work (or the dole) is the method of survival. While the G.I. Bill, NDEA, and the Peace Corps have moved appreciably toward new definitions of work, these definitions have tended to have little effect upon hard-core disadvantaged youth. What is perhaps needed is a system of non-class-bound redefinitions that (keeping in mind the cost/payoff matrix discussed above) would permit a schedule of developmental allowances, as opposed to dependency subsidies, including direct payments for academic, pre-vocational, and training sequences completed, that will move people across the spectrum of palliation to disease eradicated. This may well raise Hob with the "Protestant Ethic" and other 19th Century notions, but it could provide solutions for our economy which are feasible in terms of cost and acceptable in terms of human dignity.

The Industrial Model

In order to achieve significant gains in the area of manpower development, a broad base of cooperative effort must exist between diverse segments of society, government, and the economy. To date, this has not been the case. To be sure, industrial groups have moved quickly into programs of the Office of Economic Opportunity, notably the Job Corps, but these appear to be business ventures (on a cost-plus-fixed-fee basis) and provide no evidence that the traditional gap between those who train and those who hire will be closed or that there is a planned and coordinated manpower development partnership on the part of industry and government. Moreover, while industry is training workers, it is not training in requisite numbers nor in requisite kinds of programs. Some measure of this activity is indicated in the Labor Department Report, "Training of Workers in American Industry." * Of the industrial establishments surveyed, only 20 percent sponsored formal training programs and only 7.5 percent of the workers in these establishments were involved in formal training programs. Of the 3.6 million trainees --

(1) 1.8 million were enrolled in safety programs

(2) 300,000 were enrolled in orientation courses

(3) 385,000 received training in industrial skills

(4) 1.1 million were office and "other white collar" trainees.

The training effort of industry could be greatly expanded through some small measures, for example, giving adequate publicity to on-the-job-training

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*U. S. Department of Labor, "Training of Workers in American Industry," 1962.

programs (the 1000-job on-the-job-training program at the Chrysler Corporation was a breakthrough), providing incentives for industry to abandon the practice of paying overtime rather than hiring and training additional workers, etc.; and one large measure: formulating a comprehensive manpower development program grounded in a planned and coordinated partnership between business, industry and government.

* * * *

Throughout history there has been a rhythmical shift in the education and training demands of society -- from those of the hunting culture (which produced no surpluses) to those of the agrarian society (which did), from the Age of Bronze to the Age of Pericles, and from the mechanistic Industrial Revolution to the post-industrial, cybernated society. However, notwithstanding the models suggested above, we must have no illusions about the fact that youth employment programs of the OMAT/OJD type, at least for the foreseeable future, will continue to be worth doing and will continue to pay off.